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CURRENT LITERATURE.

BOOK REVIEWS.

A Californian manual.¹

THIS manual by Professor Jepson deserves more than a passing mention, for in a certain sense it is constructed on new lines. The average manual is chiefly a compilation of scattered literature checked by more or less herbarium study. The result is merely an approximation to the facts and never quite satisfactory to the field student. Professor Jepson has met his plants in the field and has described them as they live. He has recognized literature so far as it fits his material, but has not allowed it to bias or handicap him. As a consequence, the descriptions are remarkably fresh and telling, and have no flavor of stereotyped diagnoses. Not only is the wonderfully diverse Californian flora set forth, but numerous ecological notes suggest the factors that lie behind the diversities. Repeated attention is called to the variations in vegetative characters which a single species may undergo in different situations. The following statements from the preface are worthy of quotation, since they are of general application :

1. Near the ocean a species is often more depressed or condensed than in the interior, and more fleshy.
2. In swamps or wet soils the plant tends to become succulent and of ranker growth, and also glabrous.
3. In valley soils the growth is commonly much more rank than elsewhere.
4. On hilltops plants tend to become dwarf and acaulescent; often far more pubescent also.
5. In saline or subsaline soil the stems and foliage in many species are far more vigorous and the flowers larger than on stiff clays or adobes.
6. In the shady woods leaves become thinner and larger, often conspicuously so.
7. At high altitudes the flowers are larger in proportion to stature and brighter in color.

Such facts are known to the ecologist, but it seems hard to get the taxonomist to give them due weight. The region covered lies west of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, south of the counties of Mendocino and Colusa, and north of the Pajare river and Pacheco pass. Several such manuals will be needed to present the flora of California, and it is daily becoming more evident that no one is competent to prepare them who has not lived among the plants. The numerous analytical keys are prepared with special

¹JEPSON, WILLIS LINN : A flora of western middle California. 8vo. pp. iv + 625. Berkeley, California : Encina Publishing Company. April 16, 1901. \$2.50.

care, and the verbiage of pedantry has been eliminated. A number of new species are described, but from the statements made the field seems to be white for the harvest. Professor Jepson is to be congratulated upon producing a useful, rational, and modern manual.—J. M. C.

The Cyclopedia of American Horticulture.

The third volume of Bailey's *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture* has just come from the press of the Macmillan Company. It includes the letters N-Q.² Aside from the articles on important genera, among which the most noteworthy are those on *Nepenthes*, *Nymphaea*, *Odontoglossum*, *Oncidium*, *Opuntia*, *Pinus*, *Prunus*, *Pyrus*, and *Quercus*, the following articles are of special interest. The botanical treatment of *Orchids* is by H. Hasselbring, the culture of orchids by Robert M. Grey, with a general introduction by the editors. On the *Peach*, the general article is written by Professor Bailey, peach culture in the south is treated by J. H. Hale, peach culture in the far north (northern Vermont) by J. T. Macomber, the Michigan peach industry by R. Morrill, peach culture in Delaware by Charles Wright, the peach in California by H. Culbertson. Professors Bailey and T. T. Lyon contribute a general article on *Pear*, C. L. Watrous writes about pears on the northern plains, E. J. Wickson on the pear in California, John S. Collins on the Kieffer pear, L. T. Yeomans on dwarf pears, and George T. Powell on pears for export. The horticultural capabilities of the *Philippines* are described by F. E. Gannett. A somewhat unexpected article is the one on *Horticultural photography* by J. Horace McFarland. It ought to be very helpful and to result in the great improvement of the illustrations in our experiment station reports and other similar publications. A compact article upon the general *Physiology* of plants is contributed by Dr. B. M. Duggar. The article on *Plant breeding* by Mr. H. J. Webber will attract attention. The principles of the art are well set forth, but it is unfortunate that he unnecessarily insists on calling stamens and pistils the male and female organs of plants. On the *Plum* Professor Bailey writes the general article, Professor F. A. Waugh discusses the cultivation of native plums, and Mr. A. V. Stubenrauch gives an account of the plum in California. The article on *Pomology* is naturally handled by the editor, an appendix on Russian fruits being contributed by John Craig. The work maintains the high standard of the preceding volumes.³—C. R. B.

² BAILEY, L. H.: *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*, comprising suggestions for cultivation of horticultural plants, descriptions of the species of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and ornamental plants sold in the United States and Canada, together with geographical and biographical sketches. Vol. III. N-Q. 4to, pp. xv+10551-486, figs. 1454-2059, pls. 20-29. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1900. \$5.

³ Bot. Gaz. 29:282; 30:277. 1900.